

Testimony before the Planning and Development Committee

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Support:

H.B. No. 5171 'AN ACT CONCERNING ABANDONED AND BLIGHTED PROPERTY RECEIVERSHIP'

Senator Cassano, Representative McCarthy Vahey, and members of the Planning and Development Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H.B. 5171, 'An Act Concerning Abandoned and Blighted Property Receivership'. I am Reona Dyess, New London City Councilor, and a board member of Southeastern, CT Community Land Trust.

The Connecticut Vibrant Communities Coalition (CVCC) is dedicated to transforming vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated properties into productive community assets. CVCC is comprised of municipalities and partner organizations which address these goals through education, peer learning, leadership and policy development.

I've supported the passage of Public Act 19-92, An Act Concerning Abandoned and Blighted Property Receivership. This legislation makes it possible for qualified entities to petition the court to become the receiver of a vacant or abandoned property, carry out necessary rehabilitation, and return it to productive use. This legislation enables municipalities to transform problem properties into productive and tax-paying uses such as quality housing, economic development and community facilities.

The receivership legislation provides a critical tool to communities. However, eligibility is currently restricted to those communities with populations of 35,000 or greater. This threshold limits the ability of towns like Derby, Torrington, Windsor Locks, Newington, and New London from accessing the receivership process. In fact, less than 20% of Connecticut's municipalities reach the existing threshold, despite the pressing need to address blighted properties.

I ask for your support in approving H.B. 5171, which will remove the population limit for receivership. This step will enable all of Connecticut's communities to access the tools they need to ensure an outstanding quality of life and strong economic base.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony